

E.R.

400/81 (Conf) Miss Robb
Mr. Dabell

29 SEP 1981

400/81
Mr Jackson

Mr Taylor
Mr Stackay

- PS/Sqs(B)
- Miss Wright
- Mr Smith
- Mr Marshall
- Mr Blelloch
- Mr Wyatt
- Mr Moriarty
- Mr Harrington
- Mr Palmer ✓
- Mr Blatherwick
- Mr Doyne Ditmas
- Mr Gilliland
- Mr Corbett

JCJ
9.9.81

NOTE OF A MEETING WITH MR GERRY FITT MP ON 7 SEPTEMBER 1981

Mr Fitt called at his own request for a brief meeting with the Secretary of State.

BBC Programme

Mr Fitt said he had very recently taped an interview for the BBC TV programme "The Light of Experience". He had spoken about the hunger strike and the effect it had had on his life. He described his exposition as "dramatic". He understood that the BBC proposed to let his programme take its turn in the queue before being screened, with the result that it is not likely to be broadcast for some time. The producer and director of the programme were both, according to Mr Fitt, anxious for it to appear as soon as possible, and hopefully this coming Sunday, 13 September. He shared their view and was anxious therefore that the Secretary of State should do what was possible to ensure the early appearance of the programme. The Secretary of State said that he would look into the matter; a transcript of the programme is attached.

Hunger Strike

Mr Fitt said that there were now clear signs that support for the hunger strike was breaking up and he urged the Secretary of State to make no conciliatory moves designed to speed up this process; he believed it was enough for the Secretary of State to let events take their course.

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Mr Fitt said he had talked on a number of occasions over recent weeks to a Father Flanagan who was strongly opposed to the hunger strike and was anxious to encourage priests to voice their opposition. Mr Fitt suggested that recent activity by priests was a result part at least of Father Flanagan's activities.

Mr Fitt said that he had been telephoned some two weeks ago by Mr Kelly, the Acting Foreign Minister of the Irish Republic. They had had a long conversation and Mr Kelly had said he was adopting a robust line with his colleagues against making concessions to the PIRA. Mr Fitt will see Mr Kelly in Dublin on Thursday, 10 September.

Mr Fitt has also been discussing Northern Ireland affairs with two Socialist TDs, Mr N Brown and Mr J Kemmy (the Independent Socialist member for Limerick). Mr Kemmy was elected on an anti-IRA ticket and has been voicing his opposition to the hunger strike. He has, according to Mr Fitt, told the Taoiseach not to count on his continued support in the Dail if the Irish Government continues publicly to criticise the UK Government about the hunger strike.

Mr Fitt is arranging for Messrs Brown and Kemmy to attend the Labour Party Conference and to address a fringe meeting about Northern Ireland. Mr Seamus Lynch would also, at Mr Fitt's invitation, be addressing a meeting at the Conference. Mr Fitt believes that Mr Owen Carron MP will also be at the Conference and addressing a meeting.

S. W. Boys Smith

S W BOYS SMITH

7 September 1981